

Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 AGR-20 DOTE-00 PA-03 PRS-01

USIA-15 FMC-04 TRSE-00 SCA-01 SCSE-00 SS-15 NSC-10

RSR-01 /125 W

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R 081730Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1475

UNCLAS OTTAWA 1838

PASS AGRICULTURE, DOT, ICC, AND LABOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, CA

SUBJECT: RAILWAY STRIKE ACTIVITY WIDENS.

REF : OTTAWA 1781

1. NON-OP UNIONS HAVE HALTED RAIL SERVICE TODAY (AUGUST 8) UNTIL MIDNIGHT IN BROAD BAND OF PROVINCES BY EXTENDING ROTATING STRIKES TO MANITOBA AND SASKATCHEWAN. ONTARIO IS THUS CUT OFF BY RAIL FROM EAST AND WEST WHILE CURRENT 42-HOUR STOPPAGE IN QUEBEC ALSO CONTINUES UNTIL MIDNIGHT TODAY.

2. UNION LEADERS ARE STICKING SO FAR BY ASSURANCES THAT MOVEMENT OF PRAIRIE GRAIN WILL BE CONTINUED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. THERE ARE REPORTS, HOWEVER, OF GROWING DIFFICULTIES INVOLVING CONTAINER TRAFFIC AT MARITIME PORTS. RAIL PASSENGERS ARE EXPERIENCING SOME INCONVENIENCE AND DISCOMFORT. EMBASSY WAS NOTIFIED LAST NIGHT OF ONE GROUP OF 100 AMERICAN TOURISTS WHO EXPECTED TO BE TEMPORARILY MAROONED IN SMALL TOWN OF CHURCHILL, MANITOBA.

3. IN LATEST EFFORT SETTLE DISPUTE, OTTAWA ANNOUNCED APPOINT-
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MENT AUGUST 7 OF SPECIAL FEDERAL MEDIATOR IN PERSON OF

QUEBEC ASSOCIATE CHIEF JUSTICE ALAN GOLD WHO IS NOTED INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS EXPERT. BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED MEET WITH JUSTICE GOLD BUT UNION SPOKESMAN VOICED DEEP PESSIMISM ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF VOLUNTARY SETTLEMENT THROUGH THIS FORMAT. WAGES ARE STILL MAJOR STICKING POINT WITH UNIONS INSISTING ON 10.78 PERCENT ANNUAL INCREASE. RAILWAYS HAVE ALSO BEEN FIRM ON LAST OFFER OF 7 PERCENT FOR 1973 AND 6.5 PERCENT FOR 1974.

4. FEDERAL LABOR MINISTER JOHN MUNRO TOLD PRESS CONFERENCE ON OCCASION ANNOUNCING GOLD APPOINTMENT THAT HE IS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE AVOID INTERVENTION OF PARLIAMENT AND FEELS DISLOCATION HAS NOT YET REACHED STAGE WHERE SUCH INTERVENTION IS NEEDED.

SCHMIDT

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973OTTAWA01838
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730851/aaaablck.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 OTTAWA 1781
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Aug-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <31-Dec-2001 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RAILWAY STRIKE ACTIVITY WIDENS.
TAGS: ELAB, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005